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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the current state of instructional development (ID) in business and industry, emphasizing the differences between ID in industry and in education. The competency studies of both the American Society for Testing and Development (ASTD) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) are considered, and it is suggested that ID in business and industry differs from ID in education in the following ways: (1) business ID varies widely from organization to organization; (2) business ID is central to many organizations and its quality is correspondingly superior; (3) business ID is still quite closely tied to the concept of the subject-matter expert; (4) there must be some sort of specific problem before the business organization will turn from the subject-matter expert to the instructional developers; (5) business ID seems to be more prominent in the technical skills area then in the areas of interpersonal, sales, and personal growth skills; (6) business and industry rely far more heavily on off-the-shelf courses and materials than does education; and (7) the emphasis in business ID is on producing successful instruction, not on developing new models of instructional development. From these observations, a description of the characteristics of business ID is presented, and changes that will be brought about by the involvement of the two professional associations in the field, the AECT and the ASTD, are discussed. (Author/EW)

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C. INDUSTRY

Chapter 39

Industry and Instructional Development

Clint Wallington

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How does ID as performed within business and industry differ from ID as performed within formal educational institutions? How do the outcomes of ID differ in the two settings? What are the strengths and weaknesses of ID in business and industry which result from these differences? What is the future of ID in business and industry?

INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY? WHAT'S THAT?

The very title of this chapter illustrates one of the key problems in assessing the state-of-the-art of instructional development in the "non-education" world. Instructional development--or something very much akin to it--is **definitely** occurring in the business/industry sector. But, even though there is instructional development activity, the term "instructional development" is seldom used. Instead, the operational words are "training and development." Hence, any report, this one included, must concentrate more upon what is **happening** than upon what words appear in the literature. Even the writing of this chapter poses some special problems--whether to couch it in the terms that instructional developers use and feel comfortable with or to use the words used in business and industry to describe the same activities.

To clarify the issue, some limits to the meanings of the terms instructional development and training and development need to be set. In its glossary, the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT)--one of the chief proponents of the term, instructional development--defines it as "a systematic approach to the design, production, evaluation, and utilization of complete systems of instruction, including all appropriate components and a management pattern for using them." The definition then goes on to differentiate instructional development, which deals with systems of instruction, from instructional **product** development, which "is concerned only with isolated products," and from instructional **design,** which is only one phase of instructional development. (Presumably, one could use instructional design for instructional product development.)

The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) has just completed an extensive competency study in which training and development is defined with a focus of "identifying, assessing, and--through planned learning--helping develop the key competencies (knowledge, skill, and attitudes) which enable individuals to perform current or future jobs." Even though the AECT and the ASTD studies differ in a few details, they are essentially the same as far as the development process they are describing goes. The two most visible differences are that: first, the training and development definition **overtly** includes the initial step of determining the actual skills needed and second, the training and

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development definition relates training to "jobs." These minor differences do not change the common core of the two definitions but rather show the differences in the orientations of the two different sectors--business/industry and education--and in their terminologies. The question inevitably arises, "If the basic elements of the definitions are the same and the actual development processes are the same, why aren't training-and-development and instructional development identical--isn't the only difference **semantic**?

AND NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET

It's more than simple semantics. The difference between the two areas of practice--education as opposed to business and industry--causes some subtle, but very real, differences between the practice of instructional development and of training-and-development. Consider the following.

The purposes of the two groups differ. In most educational organizations or institutions, the primary goal is a trained/educated person who will leave the institution and pursue other goals. In a non-educational organization, training is a means to improve performance to meet the organization's primary goal. This major difference in primary goals leads to a number of **virtually unavoidable** differences in actual practices, the rules governing those practices, and hence in the process of instructional/training development.

The **primary** output of most organizations (and the process for producing that output) is usually regulated in some way. In the case of education, that means a regulation of educational programs and the degrees offered. Thus, many facets of the process are monitored--number of class meetings and instructor credentials, for example. In business and industry, it is more likely that legislation and governmental regulations will deal with the output and ignore the training of the organization's employees as long as the training does not violate health and labor codes. Think of the differences this makes in things like procedures for changing courses and curriculum **and getting the necessary approvals,** having programs reviewed, hiring instructors, and scheduling classes.

The relationship of the learner to the organization differs radically between the two areas. In formal education, the learner:

- -- has no thought of continuing the relationship with the organization after the training period,
- -- sees a definite end to the training after a specific goal is reached,
- -- undertakes generalized training for a general skill, a family of jobs, or a career,
- -- is not compensated during the training period and may actually pay for the training.

In contrast, the learner in business and industry in an in-house training program usually:

- -- envisions a continuing relationship with the organization,
- -- views training as an ongoing process during the period of employment,
- -- is trained for a specific job or for a skill directly related to the work setting, and will have the opportunity to practice that skill on the job soon after the training period,
- -- not only does not pay for the training but is actually compensated for the training.

These qualitative differences have immediate implications for instruction and instructional development. For example, in formal education a course is structured around "credit hours" or a set number of "contact hours." There is no incentive (and there may be penalties) for teaching the skill in less than the fixed number of hours. Or, because the student in education is not paid for her/his time, out-of-class assignments are normal, if not required. The situation changes when the learner is in class as part of her/his job. Yet another example is the specificity of the training. The employer who views training as an ongoing process on a "need to" basis needs only to train for specific job-related skills. An educational institution, unsure of the exact job each graduate will hold, opts for more general skills and a heavier dose of theory.

Finally, because the purposes of the two areas are different and the practices are different, so are the organizational structures and the reward systems different. This also makes for differing parameters for the two fields even though the general process is the same for both. For example, the instructional developer in the education sector is likely to seek (or at least covet) tenure, which is generally based upon scholarly research rather than upon successful instructional development efforts. The instructional developer in business and industry will look for promotion (and some raises in salary), which are more likely to be given as a result of successful projects. These differences **must** be taken into consideration as we look at the state-of-the-art in instructional development in business and industry.

SEVEN MAJOR OBSERVATIONS ON THE STATE OF THE BUSINESS/INDUSTRY INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT ART

After all that preamble, the general observation on the state of the art is, "It all depends." It depends chiefly upon the areas under examination, the measures chosen for use in evaluating the state-of-the-art, and the methods used to gather and sift data. With some oversimplification, however, it's probably safe to make the following observations, remembering that the art describes what **is** and not what ought to be (the ideal)--and also remembering that there will be exceptions to the following generalities.

First, no single organization embodies total state-of-the-art in instructional development. As

a corollary, most organizations vary widely in their approach to instructional development. It is far easier to locate training or instructional development units within an educational setting than it is in businesses or industrial organizations. In addition, the units in different educational organizations are far more likely to be similar to each other than are instructional development units in different companies--or perhaps within the same company. In a large company, it is common for each division or major operating group to have its own training--and instructional development--unit. This diversity stems from the fact that the regulation of education forces a more or less similar internal structure and the fact that training in business and industry has no inherent "home." Sometimes, training is part of marketing; sometimes, part of production; sometimes, a corporate unit; sometimes, part of personnel--or it can as readily be part of "other" or "all of the above."

Second--although they may be exceptions to the rule, there are some truly high quality, very sophisticated training programs created through equally sophisticated instructional development efforts. Some clear evidence of this can be found by examining the winners of the national instructional development awards of the National Society for Performance in Instruction (NSPI). In many instances, not only has an "instructional development system" been installed but a system to train people to work **in** the training or instructional development system has been developed and installed. The use of the instructional development system and the requisite training is often **mandated** within the organization. The advantage of this single-system approach is that both the process within and the result of the instructional development system remain relatively consistent, no matter who is doing the instructional development work.

A singular example of this approach is Xerox' adoption of Criterion Referenced Instruction (CRI) for training technical service representatives. Xerox' service education group uses CRI both to develop courses for its copier service personnel and also to train employees in how to develop instruction using CRI. Functional documentation personnel (the people who write the manuals) are also often trained in CRI so that the service manuals more closely match the coursework and field experience. The single-system approach with a number of employees trained in the approach allows for rapid assembly of instructional development teams for specific projects, yet tends to maintain a consistent output across projects--a mark of state-of-the-art indeed. In support of the first observation, it is worth noting that CRI is **not** a common practice throughout the corporation but **is** also in use at another copier manufacturer--again, primarily for training copier service personnel.

Third, instructional development in business and industry is still tightly linked to the concept of the subject-matter expert as course developer and instructor--although this is changing. Because most companies are product oriented, most first think of finding a content specialist when there is a training need. This is especially true in smaller companies which cannot afford the luxury of a broad-based training department or in companies where there is no great need for training, and instruction can be created and delivered on an **ad hoc** basis. In larger organizations or in organizations that have recognized the need for consistency in training, instructional development has made significant inroads even though the organization may train its content-matter experts to be instructional developers (as in the foregoing example). It should also be noted that with more graduates of "instructional development" programs (under any name) entering business and industry, there will be a concomitant increase in the number of trainers who are primarily instructional developers (rather than content experts) simply because this wave of instructional developers is not adverse to the idea of instructional development as a separate training function, and they will continue to promulgate the concept.

Fourth, there must be some sort of critical mass or specific training problem before a business or an industrial organization turns to and embraces instructional development. As mentioned earlier, the primary goal of business and industry is to offer a product or service to a client rather than to "improve" its training program. The cause must precede the effect. This cause can take any number of forms--poor training which affects the quality of products, increased numbers of people to be trained (or retrained), training needs spread over a large geographic area, employee turnover. At some point, an organization (at least a successful one) will identify its training needs and begin to accept the fact that the subject-matter-expert-temporarily-serving-as-trainer cannot meet a widespread training need. At this point, instructional development--given a product champion and some early successes--can flourish.

Fifth--and related to the preceding, instructional development seems to be more prominent in the technical skills area--as opposed to interpersonal skills, sales skills, and personal growth skills. One reason for singling out technical skills training for instructional development is that the procedures in technical skills are often quite specific. "Follow this procedure and you get this result." Technical skills are often widespread in an organization and there are often more employees in need of technical training than there are those who need training for upper management. It is probably significant that the majority of NSPI's instructional development and training awards go to technical skills training projects and that ASTD has a very active division for those interested in technical skills training.

Sixth, business and industry rely far more heavily upon the use of off-the-shelf courses and materials than does education. The same is true about the use of outside instructional development

(and training) consultants. Once an organization accepts the fact that there is more to training than the occasional **ad hoc** safety lecture, new employee orientation, or on-the-job training, the training department is usually charged with getting the job done rather than doing the actual training. If the trainer or instructional developer can make a reasonable case that the use of resources from outside the company is cost-effective, there are few constraints about either using existing materials or bringing in instructional developers to create the necessary instruction. This means a shift in emphasis from platform instruction to the management of instruction, often with appropriate rewards--a situation not common in education, where its absence often restricts the growth of instructional development.

Seventh, the emphasis of instructional development is upon producing successful instruction rather than upon studying the process or finding a better way of delivering instruction--**unless** the new mode of instruction/training makes the process more effective or more cost-effective. In other words, the state-of-the-art is getting the job done, **not** developing new models of instructional development. For the instructional developer from an educational setting who is entering the business/industry sector, this means solving the instructional problems at hand expediently and worrying far more about applications than about theory. **Verbum sapientibus sufficit.**

THE BOTTOM LINE

The bottom line--a common term in business and industry, but commonly misused by just about everyone--is that the state-of-the-art of instructional development in business and industry is characterized by:

- -- no clear, practical way to quantitatively assess the state-of-the-art;
- -- an overwhelming emphasis upon the practical, operational, get-it-done, to-hell-with-elegance-but-don't-look-sloppy, results-oriented side of instructional development;
- -- a strongly pragmatic and eclectic approach to instructional development--the instructional development system and/or theory chosen is the one that is most cost-effective;
- -- a very uneven level of sophistication of instructional development, with a wide range of variations possible (and even likely) **within** the same organization;
- -- the conduct of little formative evaluation (unless something doesn't work) and no summative evaluation (unless the system manager needs it for cost justification);
- -- a strong dependence upon outside consultants, either individuals or consulting firms;
- -- a value system with related practices and terminology different from the education sector;
- -- an almost total lack of communication between the business/industry and formal education sectors in instructional development (although this is breaking down--more about that in a moment);
- -- less free sharing of information and technique in the business/industry sector than in the education sector (only natural, if you think about it).

Instructional development is alive and growing in business and industry although those in the educational sector might be hard-pressed to locate, identify, classify, and measure it. But there's no doubt--it's there and flourishing. It will continue to grow, especially as companies place a greater emphasis upon training and development and realize the long-term benefits of instructional development. Moreover, the gap between the two sectors will probably continue to diminish, although they can never totally merge because of their different goals and value systems.

The foregoing observations were completed **before** the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) released its competency study in the area of training and development (June, 1983). The competency study focuses upon the area of training and development as part of a larger whole--human resource development. The ASTD competency study looks past job descriptions, and for training and development identifies thirty-one general "competencies" which are clustered into fifteen "roles." (Each competency supports more than one role; each role has at least four competencies--thus thirty-one can be spread among fifteen.) The study offers an information base and structure which allows for any number of uses--training, job descriptions, self-assessment, job performance, certification. The irony is that the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) developed much the same information base about a decade earlier in its federally-funded research study, Jobs in Instructional Media. This study also eschewed job titles, using ten functions to classify activities. (You can conceptually substitute AECT's "functions and activities" for ASTD's "roles and competencies" even though they're not precisely the same.) AECT used its study and another study to produce a rather extensive glossary of definitions and terminology which, as ASTD did, focussed upon instructional development but looked at the larger context. The Ontario (Canada) Society for Training and Development's (OSTD) Competency Analysis for Trainers was published in 1979, chronologically between the AECT and ASTD studies. Another competency "study," this one used four functions (more like the ASTD roles than the AECT functions) and twelve "competency areas," each of which have further competency subdivisions. OSTD released its material as a personal planning guide for use in practitioner self-

assessment. Although each would probably Although each would probably disclaim the notion, ASTD's "roles" and "areas" parallel AECT's "functions"--again indicating a tremendous overlap in the **process** of instructional development in the two sectors but emphasizing the dearth of communication between the two sectors. OSTD's materials are oriented toward the business/industry sector. ASTD gives no indication in its materials that it knows about the AECT work, but pieces of the study have a slightly similar feel--probably as a result of individuals who have been involved in both efforts. OSTD acknowledges an ASTD source (among others) but none in AECT. There are undoubtedly some cogent rationales for the separate efforts. But these anecdotes serve to point up the differences between the two sectors--even though practitioners in both fields may be using a similar process.

What will happen as a result of all this involvement of professional associations in the area of instructional development remains somewhat of a mystery. One can only look at some occurrences and make conjectures.

Item: AECT's Division of Instructional Development is, as of this writing, developing instruments to "certify" instructional developers--a concept which the entrepreneurial sector (those "outside" consultants) in ASTD may well find distasteful.

Item: OSTD has already disseminated their study internationally to other training associations and plans further implementation.

Item: ASTD's dissemination plans for its study encompass a variety of uses with no single, clear-cut goal. Other sectors within the Society, particularly some local chapters, have been involved in the development and may play a key role in the dissemination and utilization efforts.

Item: There is some informal movement within ASTD's Media Division to increase the emphasis of instructional development rather than media production. There will probably be some resistance to this notion and it may never see the light of day--still, up pops instructional development.

Item: The National Society for Performance and Instruction (NSPI) is rapidly becoming a haven for instructional developers from both sectors, especially those who have come to business and industry with degrees in instructional development--as opposed to traditional trainers. With its emphasis upon performance, it attracts business/industry developers who have a practical orientation; yet with a strong contingent of academics in its ranks, it can still attract those from the education sectors.

All of which leads to a different bottom line about the professional growth of the field of instructional development, when considered **en bloc,** and that is: successful, cost-effective accomplishments in business/industry will drive the growth of the "practice" of instructional development, while the association which does the best job of marketing instructional development (to practitioners and to users) and thus attracting members will affect the growth of the "field" of instructional development--and the state of the art. As mentioned earlier, it really does all depend.